

Top Secret



DIRECTORATE OF
INTELLIGENCE

Intelligence Memorandum

RECENT TRENDS IN INFILTRATION INTO SOUTH VIETNAM

Top Secret

17

22 June 1967

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
Directorate of Intelligence
22 June 1967

INTELLIGENCE MEMORANDUM

Recent Trends In Infiltration Into South Vietnam

1. Evidence thus far available in 1967 indicates that North Vietnam may be adding significantly to its main force strength in South Vietnam, not only in the area just below the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) but also further south.

The DMZ Area

2. Hanoi has clearly continued the expansion of its force level in the northern Quang Tri Province - DMZ area. In the first six months of this year, the North Vietnamese have added one infantry division--the 325th--and numerous support elements such as artillery and logistics units to the combat forces introduced into the region in 1966.

3. Of the three regiments of the 325th Division, two moved around the western edge of the DMZ in March, entering Laos during part of their journey. These units engaged US Marines at Khe Sanh in late April. The third regiment of the 325th, [redacted] from that unit, moved directly across the DMZ to screen the movement of the other two regiments.

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Areas Further South

4. [redacted] also indicated that a sizable build-up of Communist forces in the Northern Front--southern Quang Tri Province and Thua Thien Province--has been taking place this year.

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5. In addition, [redacted] reports this year have revealed a considerable build-up of Communist forces in the A Shau valley in western Thua Thien Province. [redacted] the Communists have built a road from one of their truck routes in Laos across the South Vietnam border and into the A Shau valley, increasing their ability to move and support forces in this area. [redacted]

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[redacted] reported a number of Communist units moving through Laos into this region. The level of force strength in the A Shau region is unknown but at least one regimental-size unit has been reported in the area.

6. Numerous reports [redacted] indicate the movement of large numbers of North Vietnamese battalion- and regimental-size units down the Laotian trails as far south as the Kontum Province - Cambodia border. None of these units has, as yet, been confirmed as having entered South Vietnam. It is possible that they have moved into South Vietnam but have not yet been contacted. It is also possible that these units are being held in reserve in Communist base areas in Laos and Cambodia.

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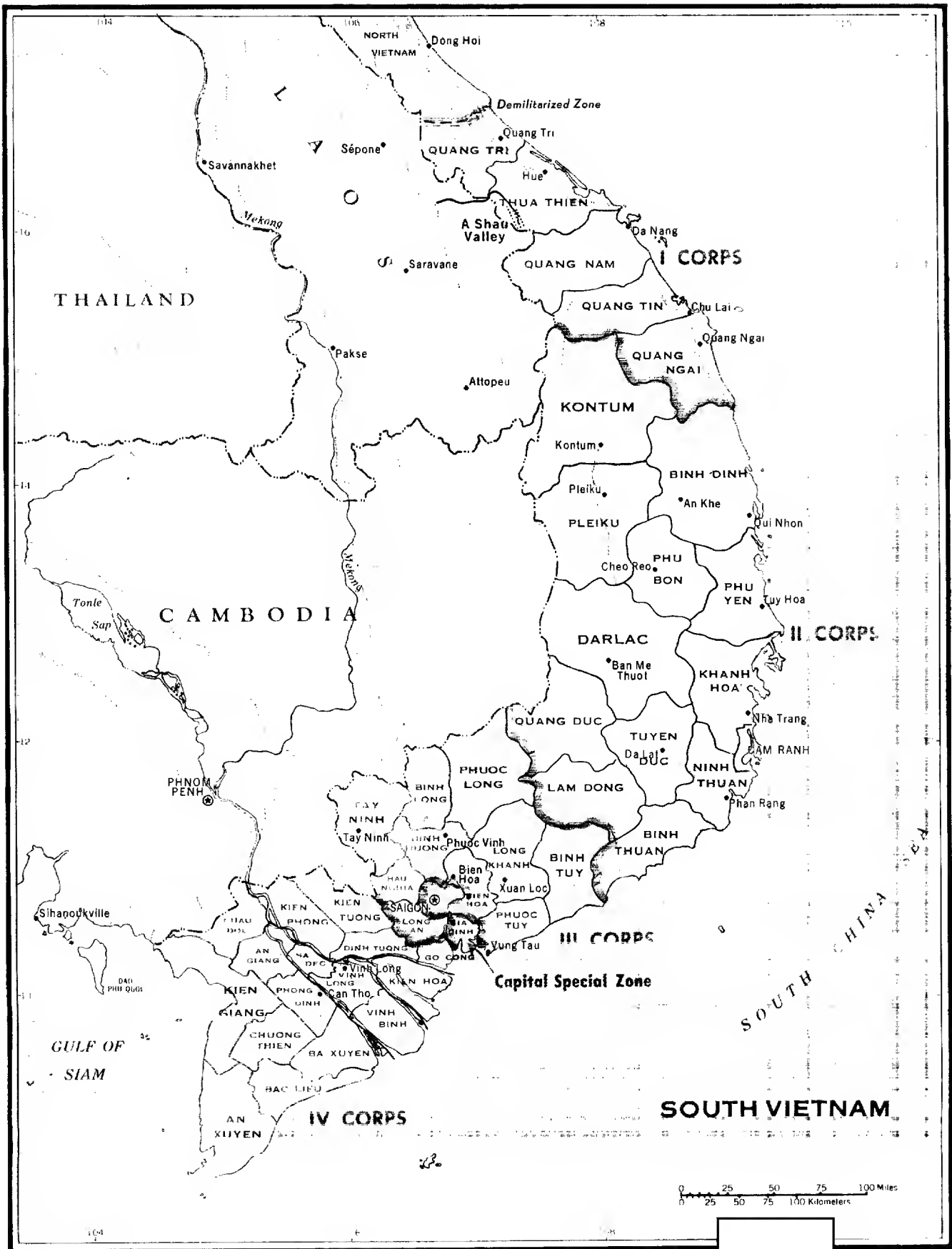
8. Undoubtedly much of the reported movement in 1967 down the Laotian corridor consists of replacement personnel and support elements for infantry regiments already in existence. One North Vietnamese soldier taken prisoner on 11 June, for example, stated that his 350-man group, which infiltrated through Laos early this year, was used to reinforce the 3rd North Vietnamese Division in Quang Ngai Province. Another prisoner has reported that his infiltration group of over 800 men was sent to the 2nd North Vietnamese Division in Quang Tin Province as replacements. The 2nd North Vietnamese Division had suffered over 1,000 killed shortly before in battles with allied forces.

9. The available evidence, however, indicates that a number of battalion- and regimental-size North Vietnamese units have been moving through Laos this year.

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22 June 1967

MEMORANDUM FOR: The Honorable Robert S. McNamara
The Secretary of Defense

SUBJECT : Recent Trends in Infiltration into
South Vietnam

After our conversation at lunch on 21 June, I asked my colleague to look into the pattern of recent trends in infiltration and review the geographic areas which seemed to be receiving additional North Vietnamese force inputs. Attached for your information is a memorandum we have prepared on this topic.

George A. Carver, Jr.
Special Assistant for Vietnamese Affairs

Attachment: AS

Distribution:

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